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THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Concord and Discord."

TEXT: "*Who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together?*"—Job xxxviii., 6, 7.

We have all seen the ceremony at the laying of the corner-stone of church, asylum or Masonic temple. Into the hollow of the stone were placed scrolls of history and imprtant documents to be suggestive if one or two hundred years after the building should be destroyed by fire or torn down. We remember the silver trowel or iron hammer that smote the square piece of granite into sanctity. We remember some venerable man who presided, wielding the trowel or hammer. We remember also the music as the choir stood on the scattered stones and timber of the building about to be constructed. The leaves of the notebooks fluttered in the wind and were turned over with a great rustling, and we remember how the bass, baritone, tenor, contralto and soprano voices commingled. They had for many days been rehearsing the special programme, that it might be worthy of the corner-stone laying.

In my text the poet of Uz calls us to a grander ceremony—the laying of the foundation of this great temple of a world. The corner stone was a block of light, and the trowel was of celestial crystal. All about and on the embankments of cloud stood the angelic choristers, unrolling their librettos of overture, and other worlds clapped shining cymbals while the ceremony went on, and God, the architect, by stroke of light after stroke of light, dedicated this great cathedral of a world, with mountains for pillars, and sky for frescoed ceiling, and flowering fields for floors, and sunrise and midnight aurora for upholstery. "Who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together?"

The fact is that the whole universe was a complete cadence, an unbroken dithyramb, a musical portfolio. The great sheet of immensity had been spread out, and written on it were the stars, the smaller of them minims, the larger of them sustained notes. The meteors marked the staccato passages, the whole heavens a gamut, with all sounds, intonations and modulations, the space between the worlds a musical interval, trembling of stellar light a quaver, the thunder a bass clef, the wind among trees a treble clef. That is the way God made all things, a perfect harmony.

But one day a harp string snapped in the great orchestra. One day a voice sounded out of tune. One day a discord, harsh and terrific, grated upon the glorious antiphony. It was sin that made the dissonance, and that harsh discord has been sounding through the centuries. All the work of Christians, and philanthropists, and reformers of all ages, is to stop that discord and get all things back into the perfect harmony which was heard at the laying of the corner-stone when the morning stars sang together. Before I get through, if I am divinely helped, I will make it plain that sin is discord and righteousness is harmony.

That things in general are out of tune is as plain as to a musician's ear is the unhappy clash of clarionet and bassoon in an orchestral rendering.

The world's health out of tune: Weak lung and the amosphere in collision, disordered eye and noonday light in quarrel, rheumatic limb and damp weather in struggle, neuralgias, and pneumonias, and consumptions, and epilepsies in flocks swoop upon neighborhoods and cities. Where you find one person with sound throat, and keen eyesight, and alert ear, and easy respiration, and regular pulsation, and supple limb, and prime digestion, and steady nerves, you find a hundred who have to be very careful because this, or that, or the other physical function is disordered.

The human intellect out of tune: The judgment wrongly swerved, or the memory leaky, or the will weak, or the temper inflammable, and the well-balanced mind exceptional. Domestic life out of tune: Not only here and there a conjugal outbreak of incompatibility of temper through the divorce courts, or a filial outbreak about a father's will through the Surrogate's Court, or a case of wife-beating or husband poisoning through the criminal courts, but thousands of families with June outside and January within.

Society out of tune: Labor and capital; their hands on each other's throats. Spirit of caste keeping those down in the social scale in a struggle to get up, and putting those who are up in anxiety lest they have to come down. No wonder the old pianoforte of society is all out of tune, when hypocrisy, and lying, and subterfuge, and double dealing, and sycophancy, and charlatanism, and revenge have for 6,000 years being banging away at the keys and stamping the pedals.

On all sides there is a perpetual shipwreck of harmonies. Nations in discord. Without realizing it, so wrong is the feeling of nation for nation that the symbols chosen are fierce and destructive. In this country, where our skies are full of robins and doves and morning larks, we have for our national symbol the fierce and filthy eagle, as immoral a bird as can be found in all the ornithological catalogues. In Great Britain, where they have lambs and fallow deer, their symbol is the merciless lion. In Russia, where from between her frozen north and blooming south all kindly beasts dwell, they choose the growling bear; and in the world's heraldry a favorite figure is the dragon, which is a winged serpent, ferocious and dreadful. And so fond is the world of contention that we climb out through the heavens and baptize one of the other planets with the spirit of battle, and call it Mars, after the god of war, and we give to the eighth sign of the zodiac the name of the scorpion, a creature which is chiefly celebrated for its deadly sting. But, after all, these symbols are expressive of the way nation feels toward nation. Discord wide as the continent and bridging the seas. I suppose you have noticed how warmly in love dry goods stores are with other dry goods stores, and how highly grocerymen think of the sugars of the grocerymen on the same block. And in what a eulogistic way allopathic and homœopathic doctors speak of each other, and how ministers will sometimes put ministers on that beautiful cooking instrument which the English call a spit, an iron roller with spikes on it, and turned by a crank before a hot fire, and then if the minister being roasted cries out against it, the men who are turning him say: "Hush, brother! we are turning this spit for the glory of God and the good of your soul, and you must be quiet while we close the service with:

"Blest be the ties that binds
Our hearts in Christian love."

The earth is diametered and circumferenced with discord, and the music that was rendered at the laying of the world's corner stone, when the morning stars sang together, is not heard now; and though here and there, from this and that part of society, and from this and that part of the earth, there comes up a thrilling solo of love, or a warble of worship, or a sweet duet of patience, they are drowned out by a discord that shakes the earth.

Paul says: "The whole creation groaneth;" and while the nightingale, and the woodlark, and the canary, and the plover, sometimes sing so sweetly that their notes have been written out in musical notation, and it is found that the cuckoo sings in the key of D, and that the cormorant is a basso in the winged choir, yet sportsman's gun and the autumnal blast often leave them ruffled and bleeding, or dead in meadow or forest. Paul was right, for the groan in nature drowns out the prima donnas of the sky.

Tartini, the great musical composer, dreamed one night that he made a contract with Satan, the latter to be ever in the composer's service. But one night he handed to Satan a violin, on which Diabolus played such sweet music that the composer was awakened by the emotion and tried to reproduce the sounds, and therefrom was written Tartini's most famous piece, entitled the "Devil's Sonata," a dream ingenious but faulty, for all melody descends from heaven, and only discords ascend from hell. All hatreds, feuds, controversies, backbitings and revenges are the devil's sonata, are diabolic fugue, are demoniac phantasy, are grand march of doom, are allegro of perdition.

But if in this world things in general are out of tune to our frail ear, how much more so to ears angelic and deific. It takes a skilled artist fully to appreciate disagreement of sound. Many have no capacity to detect a defect of musical execution, and, though there were in one bar as many offenses against harmony as could crowd in between the lower F of the bass and the higher G of the soprano, it would give them no discomfort, while on the forehead of the educated artist beads of perspiration would stand out as a result of the harrowing dissonance. While an amateur was performing on a piano and had just struck the wrong chord, John Sebastian Bach, the immortal composer, entered the room, and the amateur rose in embarrassment, and Bach rushed past the host, who stepped forward to greet him, and before the keyboard had stopped vibrating, put his adroit hand upon the keys, and changed the painful inharmony into glorious cadence. Then Bach turned and gave salutation to the host who had invited him.

But the worst of all discords is moral discord. If society and the world are painfully discordant to imperfect man, what must they be to a perfect God? People try to define what sin is. It seems to me that sin is getting out of harmony with God, a disagreement with His holiness, with His purity, with His love, with His commands; our will clashing with His will, the finite dashing against the infinite, the frail against the puissant, the created against the Creator. If a thousand musicians, with flute, and cornet-a-piston, and trumpet, and violoncello, and hautboys, and trombone, and all the wind and stringed instruments that ever gathered in a Dusseldorf jubilee, should resolve that they would play out of tune and put concord to the rack, and make the place wild with shrieking, and grating, and rasping sounds, they could not make such a pandemonium as that which rages in a sinful soul when God listens to the play of its thoughts, passions and emotions—discord, lifelong discord, maddening discord. The world pays more for discord than it does for consonance. High prices have been paid for music. One man gave $225 to hear the Swedish songstress in New York, and another $625 to hear her in Boston, and another $650 to hear her in Providence. Fabulous prices have been paid for sweet sounds, but far more has been paid for discord. The Crimean war cost $1,700,000,000, and our American cival war over $9,500,000,000, and the war debts of professed Christian nations are about $15,000,000,000. The world pays for this red ticket, which admits it to the saturnalia of broken bones, and death agonies, and destroyed cities, and plowed graves, and crushed hearts, any amount of money Satan asks. Discord! Discord!

But I have to tell you that the song that the morning stars sang together at the laying of the world's corner-stone is to be resumed again. Mozart's greatest overture was composed one night when he was several times overpowered with sleep, and artists say they can tell the places in the music where he was falling asleep and the places where he awakened. So the overture of the morning stars spoken of in my text has been asleep, but it will awaken and be more grandly rendered by the evening stars of the world's existence than by the morning stars, and the vespers will be sweeter than the matins. The work of all good men and women and of all good churches and all reform associations is to bring the race back to the original harmony. The rebellious heart to be attuned, social life to be attuned, commercial ethics to be attuned, internationality to be attuned, hemispheres to be attuned—but by what force and in what way?

In olden time the choristers had a tuning fork with two prongs, and they would strike it on the back of pew or music rack and put it to the ear and then start the tune, and all the other voices would join. In modern orchestra the leader has a complete instrument, rightly attuned, and he sounds that, and all the other performers turn the keys of their instruments to make them correspond, and sound the bow over the string, and listen, and sound out over again, until all the keys are screwed to concert pitch, and the discords melt into one great symphony, and the curtain hoists, and the baton taps, and audiences are raptured with Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" or Rossini's "Stabat Mater" or Bach's "Magnificat" in D, or Gounod's "Redemption."

Now, our world can never be attuned by an imperfect instrument. Even a Cremona would not do. Heaven has ordained the only instrument, and it is made out of the wood of the cross, and the voices that accompany it are imported voices, cantatrices of the first Christmas night, when heaven serenaded the earth with "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to men." Lest we start too far off and get lost in generalities, we had better begin with ourselves, get our own hearts and life in harmony with the eternal Christ. Oh, for His almighty spirit to attune us, to chord our will with his will, to modulate our life with his life, and bring us into unison with all that is pure and self-sacrificing and heavenly. The strings of our nature are all broken and twisted, and the bow is so slack it cannot evoke anything mellifluous. The instrument made for heaven to play on has been roughly twanged and struck by influences worldly and demoniac. O, master hand of Christ, restore this split and fractured and despoiled and unstrung nature until it shall wail out for this sin, and then thrill with divine pardon.

The whole world must also be attuned by the same power. A few days ago I was in the Fairbanks weighing scale manufactory of Vermont. Six hundred hands, and they have never had a strike. Complete harmony between labor and capital, the operatives of scores of years in their beautiful homes near by the mansions of the manufacturers, whose invention and Christian behavior made the great enterprise. So all the world over labor and capital will be brought into euphony. You may have heard what is called the "Anvil Chorus," composed by Verdi, a tune played by hammers, great and small, now with mighty stroke, and now with heavy stroke, beating a great iron anvil. That is what the world has got to come to—anvil chorus, yard stick chorus, shuttle chorus, trowel chorus, crowbar chorus, pickax chorus, gold mine chorus, rail track chorus, locomotive chorus. It can be done, and it will be done. So all social life will be attuned by the Gospel harp. There will be as many classes in society as now, but the classes will not be regulated by birth, or wealth, or accident, but by the scale of virtue and benevolence, and people will be assigned to their places as good, or very good, or most excellent. So also, commercial life will be attuned, and there will be twelve in every dozen and sixteen ounces in every pound, and apples at the bottom of the barrel will be as sound as those on top, and silk goods will not be cotton, and sellers will not have to charge honest people more than the right price because others will not pay, and goods will come to you corresponding with the sample by which you purchased them, and coffee will not be chickoried and sugar will not be sanded, and milk will not be chalked and adulteration of food will be a State's prison offense. Aye, all things shall be attuned. Elections in England and the United States will no more be a grand carnival of defamation and scurrility, but the elevation of righteous men in a righteous way.

In the Sixteenth century the singers, called the Fischer brothers, reached the lowest bass ever recorded, and the highest note ever thrilled was by La Bastardella, and Catalini's voice had a compass of three and a half octaves, but Christianity is more wonderful, for it runs all up and down the greatest heights and the deepest depths of the world's necessity, and it will compass everything and bring it in accord with the song which the morning stars sang at the laying of the world's corner-stone. All the sacred music in homes and concert halls and churches tends toward this consummation. Make it more and more hearty. Sing in your families. Sing in your places of business. If we with proper spirit use these faculties, we are rehearsing for the skies.

Heaven is to have a new song, an entirely new song, but I should not wonder if, as sometimes on earth a tune is fashioned out of many tunes, or it is one tune with the variations, so some of the songs of the redeemed may have playing through them the songs of earth, and how thrilling as coming through the great anthem of the saved, accompanied by harpers with their harps, and trumpeters with their trumpets, we should hear some of the strains of Antioch, and Mount Pisgah, and Coronation, and Lenox, and St. Martin's, and Fountain, and Ariel and Old Hundred. How they would bring to mind the praying circles, and communion days, and the Christmas festivals, and the church worship in which on earth we mingled! I have no idea that when we bid farewell to earth we are to bid farewell to all these grand old Gospel hymns which melted and raptured our souls for so many years. Now, my friends, if sin is discord and righteousness is harmony, let us get out of the one and enter the other. After our dreadful civil war was over, and in the summer of 1869, a great national peace jubilee was held in Boston, and as an elder of this church had been honored by the selection of some of his music, to be rendered on that occasion, I accompanied him to the jubilee. Forty thousand people sat and stood in the great Coliseum erected for that purpose. Thousands of wind and stringed instruments. Twelve thousand trained voices. The masterpieces of all ages rendered, hour after hour, and day after day—Handel's "Judas Maccabæus," Spohr's "Last Judgment," Beethoven's "Mount of Olives," Haydn's "Creation," "Mendelssohn's "Elijah," Meyerbeer's "Coronation March," rolling on and up in surges that billowed against the heavens. The mighty cadence within were accompanied on the outside by the ringing of the bells of the city and cannon on the commons, in exact time with the music discharged by electricity, thundering their awful bars of harmony that astounded all nations.

Sometimes I bowed my head and wept. Sometimes I stood up in the enchantment, and sometimes the effect was so overpowering I felt I could not endure it. When all the voices were in full chorus, and all the batons in full wave, and all the orchestra in full triumph, and a hundred anvils under mighty hammers were in full clang, and all the towers of the city rolled in their majestic sweetness, and the whole building quaked with the boom of thirty cannon, Parepa Rosa, with a voice that will never again be equaled on earth until the archangelic voice proclaims that time shall be no longer, rose above all other sounds in her rendering of our national air, the "Star Spangled Banner." It was too much for a mortal, and quite enough for an immortal, to hear, and while some fainted, one womanly spirit, released under its power, sped away to be with God.

O Lord, our God, quickly usher in the whole world's peace jubilee, and all islands of the sea join the five continents, and all the voices and musical instruments of all nations combine, and all the organs that ever sounded requiem of sorrow sound only a grand march of joy, and all the bells that tolled for burial ring for resurrection, and all the cannon that ever hurled death across the nations sound to eternal victory, and over all the acclaim of earth and minstrely of heaven there will be heard one voice sweeteer and mightier than any human or angelic voice—a voice once full of tears, but now full of triumph—the voice of Christ saying: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Then at the laying of the top-stone of the world's history the same voices shall be heard as when, at the laying of the world's corner-stone, "the morning stars sang together."

Temperance News and Notes.

Fifteen counties in Florida have voted under local option law, and prohibition has carried in twelve of them.

The Kansas druggists required by law to get 25 women to sign their petitions for permits to sell liquor, find it a difficult condition.

A temperance *cafe* has been opened in Montreaux, Switzerland, close to the resort of boatmen, coachmen and others. Temperance is making rapid progress in Switzerland.

The superintendent of the Schuylkill Valley Division of the Reading Railroad, has issued an order forbidding the employees of the company, whether on or off duty, to drink liquor, and directing that any man who is reported to have been seen drinking even a single glass of beer or strong liquor, shall be instantly dismissed.

The *Pioneer-Press*, of St. Paul and Minneapolis, says of Minneapolis that "the municipal records show the period since the inauguration of the $1,000 license to have been more prolific in drunkenness than any corresponding period in the history of the city.

"The play's the thing.
Wherein I'll reach the conscience of the king."

And equal true is it that Dr. Pierce's "Pleasant Purgative Pellets" (the original Little Liver Pills) are the most effectual means that can be used to reach the seat of disease, cleansing the bowels and system, and assisting nature in her recuperative work. By druggists.

The Des Moines, Iowa, *Register* says: "The two cities in the State that are having most prosperity, doing the most building, and investing the most money in solid improvements this year, are Des Moines and Sioux City, two places from which the saloons are banished forever."

A prominent liquor dealer in Tennessee said after the recent election: "One more such victory as this, and the profits will all be knocked out of the whisky business in Tennessee."

The Lewistown (Me.) *Journal* says: "Fear is creeping into the hearts of liquor dealers here and there over the country. There is too much of business in the advancing tide of temperance reform to suit them."

Mrs. Mary Clement Leavitt, the around-the-world missionary of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, recently had an audience with the King of Siam, who talked with her in English, and showed much interest in the temperance cause.

Paper is now utilized in the manufacture of coffins.